

DAN SMOOT

CASE STUDY OF A CONSPIRACY "EXPERT" -- rev. March 2019

It probably is not much of an exaggeration to observe that, eventually, every right-wing conspiracy proponent gets around to quoting former FBI Special Agent Dan Smoot as an expert witness about matters pertaining to the "*Master Conspiracy*" operating in the United States.

Many conspiracy authors cite Dan's 1962 book, *The Invisible Government*, for its unique insights based upon his "*inside knowledge*" as a former FBI Special Agent. [In 2019, the operative descriptive term is "Deep State"].

In late 1993 I read Dan's autobiography entitled *People Along The Way*. I was curious about Dan's explanation for why he decided to leave the FBI (pages 181-184 of his book) - especially since I had received preliminary documents from the FBI which seemed to contradict Dan's explanation.

In January 1994 I decided to write to Dan to seek further information. In my letter, I quoted a single paragraph from an FBI document I had received which stated that, shortly before his resignation from the Bureau, Dan "**was censured, placed on probation, and transferred due to several unfounded charges against his SAC.**" [Special-Agent-In-Charge of an FBI Field Office].

Dan replied to me on January 24, 1994. In his letter, Dan wrote:

"Your source says that I was censured and placed on probation. If so, I never heard about it before reading your letter. I never received any kind of notice, written or oral, from anyone, that I had been censured and put on probation. I assumed that my transfer to Savannah was a disciplinary transfer, but it was not designated as such when delivered to me."

That is where matters stood until July 24, 2003 when Dan died. I then sent a Freedom-of-Information-Act request to the FBI for his personnel file. I received documents in July 2004 and July 2005.

It turns out that Dan had been censured on three occasions during his relatively brief FBI career. According to his personnel file, the final occasion came about as a consequence of an inspection of the Dallas field office where Dan was assigned.

First, let's review Dan's explanation of the pertinent events. Afterward I will provide the Bureau's explanation:

DAN SMOOT'S EXPLANATION FROM HIS JANUARY 24, 1994 LETTER TO ME:

"I liked and admired my last boss in the FBI (Special Agent in Charge of the Dallas Office), but five or six other experienced agents frequently complained about him. While the Dallas office was being inspected, they talked me into telling the Inspector that the SAC apparently had a personnel problem: but, when interviewed by the inspector, not one of them backed me up. This converted my considerable friend, the SAC, into a bitter enemy. It was he, I assume, who caused me to be transferred out of the Dallas office. I hold no grudge or ill-will toward him for this. I stupidly thought I was acting for the good of the service when I suggested the inspector try to help him with any personnel problem he might have; he, naturally, thought I stabbed him in the back for no reason at all."

"I tried to put this in my book as one of my FBI experiences; but it seemed incomprehensible unless fleshed out with explanations, names, personalities, and details about the inner workings of the FBI family. With all that added, the incident was much too long, too dull, too pointless."

"Now, your letter of January 20, 1994 comes as a thunderclap of news: that 1951 event which I cast aside as trivial was, by far, the most significant of all my FBI experiences. Apparently, it has forever branded me, in the FBI file, as a villain; and I had always had very good or excellent ratings before then."

DAN'S CLAIM THAT HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF HIS CENSURE OR PROBATION:

Dan's personnel file contains a copy a May 15, 1951 censure letter written by J. Edgar Hoover which was mailed to Smoot at the Dallas field office. Here is the text:

"The Bureau has reviewed information developed during the course of the recent inspection of the Dallas Division, at which time you submitted a memorandum setting out certain criticisms of your Special Agent in Charge (SAC) and it has been ascertained that you were aware of certain discussions on the part of other Agents assigned to your office, which were critical of the manner in which your SAC handled a phase of the case involving (name deleted). It is further noted that these matters came to your attention in November 1950 but you took no action for the purpose of informing the Bureau until your discussion with the Inspector. You were also critical of the manner in which your SAC conducted an inquiry into certain complaints which had been made against a former Special Agent who was assigned to the Dallas Division, and it has been determined that such criticisms on your part were entirely unwarranted."

"The above matters are most certainly not in keeping with the standards expected of Bureau agents. Accordingly, you are being placed on probation; it will be incumbent upon you to establish by the proper performance of your duties and by your careful fulfillment of all your responsibilities as an Agent that you are qualified and properly disposed to continue in that position. Should there be any recurrence of the dereliction mentioned above, more severe administrative action may become necessary."

In addition, Dan received an interim "*Special Efficiency Report*" covering his performance from April 1, 1951 to his resignation. Dan was rated "*unsatisfactory*" in the following category:

"Attitude (including dependability, cooperativeness, loyalty, enthusiasm, amenability, and willingness to equitably share workload.)"

Attached to this report was a SAC memo. Directly underneath the final paragraph of the SAC memo (text shown below) Dan entered his initials to confirm receipt of the Special Efficiency Report and SAC memo.

The final paragraph was:

"During the course of a recent inspection in the Dallas Division this agent submitted a memorandum setting out certain criticisms of the SAC and was critical of the manner in which the SAC conducted an inquiry into certain complaints which had been made against a former Special Agent who was formerly assigned to the Dallas Division. It was determined that such criticisms on the part of this agent were entirely unwarranted. As the result of this agent's unfounded complaints, by letter dated May 15, 1951, the Bureau placed this agent on probation and transferred him from the Dallas Division to the Savannah Division." [HQ 67-263689, serials #145-#148; my emphasis in bold type]

By letter dated June 8, 1951, Dan resigned from the Bureau.

THE BUREAU'S EXPLANATION OF WHAT TRANSPIRED DURING THE INSPECTION OF THE DALLAS OFFICE:

"He [Smoot] misinterpreted, repeated and set forth in a memorandum to the Inspector allegations which were entirely incorrect...He unjustly criticized the SAC concerning the SAC's handling of an inquiry which resulted in the resignation of a former Special Agent. He failed to notify the Bureau or the SAC of the existence of the above-mentioned allegations...It was evident during the course of the interview that Smoot had an intense dislike for the SAC. He admitted he did resent the SAC in agents' conferences making grammatical errors while expressing himself...He also stated the agents of the office had no respect for the SAC, and it was determined this opinion was not shared by other agents. By letter dated 5/15/51 he was censured, placed on probation, and ordered under transfer to the Savannah office."

The Bureau Agent who conducted the inspection of the Dallas office (Gerald C. Gearty) recommended 4 actions against Smoot:

- "1. That he be transferred to another division
2. That he be placed on probation
3. That he be suspended for 10 days without pay.

4. That he receive a severe letter of censure."

[See HQ 67-263689, #144; 5/4/51 memo from H.L. Edwards to Mr. Glavin]

Gearty's 60-page report concerning Smoot's charges was sent to J. Edgar Hoover on April 24, 1951. It includes a 4/9/51 memo by Smoot in which Dan summarized, from his perspective, the events that occurred and how he became involved.

In his memo, Smoot admits that "I had only hearsay information" with respect to "serious charges against two Bureau officials" which he had not reported prior to the inspection of the Dallas office but which subsequently became the basis of Smoot's accusations against his SAC.

DAN SMOOT'S CLAIMS ABOUT HIMSELF AFTER RETIRING FROM THE FBI

Dan described himself as follows in a biographical sketch appearing in the 8/3/56 issue of his newsletter, *Dan Smoot Report*. I have highlighted two portions in bold type - which I will discuss momentarily.

"Dan Smoot was born in Missouri. Reared in Texas, he attended SMU in Dallas, taking BA and MA degrees from that university in 1938 and 1940. In 1941 he joined the faculty at Harvard as a Teaching Fellow in English, doing graduate work for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the field of American Civilization. In 1942 he took a leave of absence from Harvard in order to join the FBI. At the close of the war, he stayed in the FBI rather than return to Harvard. He served as an FBI Agent in all parts of the nation, handling all kinds of assignments. But for three and a half years, he worked **exclusively on communist investigations in the industrial midwest**. For two years following that, he was on FBI HQ staff in Washington, as an **Administrative Assistant to J. Edgar Hoover**."

Communist Investigations:

Dan's claim that he worked "exclusively on communist investigations" for "3 ½ years" is contradicted by his 1993 autobiography.

In that autobiography, Dan wrote that he was assigned to the Communist squad in Cleveland for three years but speaking engagements and training "took up much of my time during the remaining months of my tenure in the Cleveland office (and) gave me considerable relief from Communist duty..." [Dan Smoot, *People Along The Way*, Tyler Press, 1993, page 162.]

Dan's personnel file reflects that he did work on investigations involving Communist infiltration of labor unions, but there is nothing to support Dan's claim that he worked "exclusively" on Communist matters. His autobiography also mentions that he found this work to be boring and tedious.

Administrative Assistant to J. Edgar Hoover:

With respect to Dan's claim that he worked as an "Administrative Assistant to J. Edgar Hoover", a definitive memo from the FBI discusses this matter. I quote extensively from it below. It should be kept in mind while reading this memo that there were only two FBI Special Agents whose post-FBI use of this descriptive term became an issue - Dan Smoot and W. Cleon Skousen.

The memo is captioned:

"Former Special Agent Howard D. Smoot: Use of Title Administrative Assistant"

Purpose: To report results of a review of the personnel file of captioned individual and references in Bureau files to determine if former SA Howard D. Smoot, better known as Dan Smoot, was ever referred to in Bureau correspondence or biographical sketches as an Administrative Assistant to the Director.

"Dan Smoot: Former SA Howard D. Smoot entered on duty with the Bureau on March 23, 1942 and resigned on 6-15-51 while assigned to the Dallas office. He had worked in the Portland, San Francisco, Dallas and Cleveland offices prior to being transferred to the Bureau (HQ) in October 1946. After serving a short time in the Investigative Division, he was transferred on 2-15-47 to the Crime Records Section where he remained until transferred to Dallas for health reasons in November 1948. On May 15, 1951, Smoot was censured, placed on probation and transferred to the Savannah office

because of his failure to inform the Bureau earlier of information in his possession concerning misconduct of others in the Dallas office, and for making unfounded charges against his SAC. Thereafter, he resigned."

"In June 1951, Smoot began working for *'Facts Forum'*, a group financed and backed by the millionaire oil man H.L. Hunt, owner and operator of the Hunt Oil Company. Smoot resigned from *'Facts Forum'* in July 1955 and thereafter operated privately as a commentator and publisher of a newsheet entitled *'The Dan Smoot Report'*. This report was the subject of SAC Letter 59-17 (F) dated 3-24-59 which identified Smoot as a former Agent and instructed that inquiries concerning him and his paper be handled in a most circumspect manner."

"A thorough review of the three-volume personnel file of Smoot (67-263689) fails to reflect any reference to him as an *'Administrative Assistant'* or an *'Administrative Assistant to the Director'*. This title did not appear in any letter of appointment, transfer, censure or probation. No communication concerning speeches given by Smoot or any other official matter concerning him contained either of these titles. After Smoot left the Bureau, he was publicly described in newspaper articles as an Administrative Assistant to the Director. Files indicate he has continued to use this designation."

"Review of Bureau files: The specific matter concerning the use of the title *'Administrative Assistant'* by Smoot was the subject of a memorandum dated 9-13-61 from Mr. Callahan to Mr. Mohr (original attached). It points out that the Bureau has never had an official position classification for SA's of either *'Administrative Assistant'* or *'Administrative Assistant to the Director'*. There were times in the late 1930's when Agent Supervisors at the Seat of Government were referred to as Administrative Assistants in outgoing correspondence in connection with speeches. A SAC Letter dated 7-9-47 advised that there was no such title for Agents as *'Administrative Assistant to the Director'* or *'Administrative Assistant'* and that such a title should never be used in referring to representatives of the Bureau." ...

"Recommendation: For information. I recommend we continue the same policy as set forth above. It appears obvious that Smoot is attempting to use his prior service with the FBI as much as possible. **He is a professional 'anticommunist' who is strictly out for money.**" ... [HQ 62-102576, #125; 11/8/62 memo from D.C. Morrell to Mr. DeLoach; my emphasis in red type.]

July 1962 Smoot Reply To Inquiry About His FBI Status

In July 1962, Smoot replied to an inquiry by an Indiana resident concerning his FBI career. The inquiry asked Smoot about rumors that Dan had retired from the FBI due to a *"nervous condition"* according to an alleged report by a former FBI employee.

In his reply, Smoot said that other rumors had been circulated concerning his status including one that he was fired for stealing. Dan then wrote:

"All the rumors, including the one you heard, are false. After 9 years and three months in the FBI, I was still an Agent in good standing when I resigned voluntarily in June, 1951—under no kind of threat or pressure to do so. I resigned because I wanted to change my occupation and settle my family permanently in Dallas." [HQ 62-102576, #110; 7/10/62 letter by Smoot in reply to inquiry]

As demonstrated from the data summarized above, Dan lied by referring to himself as **"an Agent in good standing"** when he resigned.

To re-capitulate:

1. Dan received a censure letter from Hoover
2. Dan received a Special Efficiency Report which contained derogatory statements and which specifically told him he was on probation --- and Dan initialed the document to confirm he received it
3. In his 1994 letter to me, Dan admits that even he assumed his transfer to Savannah was a **"disciplinary transfer"**.

MY SUBSEQUENT LETTER TO DAN

On March 20, 1995 I again wrote to Dan because of comments appearing in the February 22, 1965 issue of *Dan Smoot Report*. In that issue, Dan stated that "the civil rights movement in the United States is a Communist creation, and has been largely manipulated by the Communists since it was created."

In my letter, I asked Dan if, while employed in the FBI, he ever had occasion to read a Bureau monograph entitled "*Communist Party and the Negro*" or "*Communism and the Negro Movement—A Current Analysis*." I also asked him if he had access to any other Bureau summary reports concerning the civil rights movement.

Dan never replied. However, in 2004, I obtained copies of my correspondence from Texas A&M University where some of Dan's private papers were archived. Dan wrote across the top of it: "No answer".

DAN ON CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT:

Dan discussed the civil rights movement at length in the February 22, 1965 issue of *Dan Smoot Report* (DSR).

I shall discuss two comments by Dan:

- (1) his assertion about a Negro Soviet Republic being current Communist strategy and
- (2) his assertion that our civil rights movement was "*a Communist creation*".

Negro Soviet Republic:

According to Dan:

"In 1928, Joseph Stalin gave specific directions: the communist goal was to confiscate the property of all whites in the 'black-belt' region of the American southern States, detach the region from the Union, and establish it as a Negro Soviet Republic. This communist objective has never been altered." (DSR, 2/22/65, page 57; my emphasis in red type)

By contrast, compare Dan's statement to J. Edgar Hoover's January 1960 testimony before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee during which Hoover discussed the 17th National Convention of the Communist Party USA held in New York City on December 10, 1959:

"The Negro resolution adopted by the convention discarded the party's historic position advocating 'self-determination' meaning that Negroes should be given the right to form a separate nation in the Southern States...The 1959 convention resolution hence represents a party admission that its position concerning Negroes is bankrupt. Time itself has shown that the party is not interested in the welfare of the Negro, but only in using him as a tool to advance party interests." [J. Edgar Hoover: *An Analysis of the 17th National Convention of the Communist Party USA*; Statement made to Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, 1/17/60, page 7; Also see: *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, March 1960 - for same comment.]

Even the KKK newspaper, *The Fiery Cross*, recognized this change of Communist strategy!

"With the CPUSA steadily declining in open membership, the official doctrine was changed from creating a separate Negro state in the U.S. to one of full integration. (Ben) Davis [National Secretary CPUSA] had argued for this change in order to obtain maximum Negro support. The party line change became official in 1959." [*The Fiery Cross*, "Communist Exploitation of the U.S. Racial Crisis", August 1964, page 1]

Furthermore, this change of Communist strategy was confirmed by FBI informants who subsequently testified before the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

Both of the FBI informants cited below (Lola Belle Holmes and Julia Brown) became paid speakers for the John Birch Society after they surfaced as FBI informants. Dan Smoot endorsed and recommended the Birch Society.

Lola Belle Holmes testified about the internal CP dispute at its 17th National Convention in New York City over a document entitled "*Theoretical Aspects of the Negro Question In the United States*". Lola told the House Committee on Un-American Activities that:

"This document was a very controversial document and the theoretical aspect of the Negro question was a very controversial question. It took up more time in the national convention than any other question because the CP does not fight for equal rights of Negroes; only in theory; it is not especially interested in the Negro problems; it does not want to solve the Negro problems. Therefore, it was a problem to get the Communist Party to act on a Negro resolution supporting the civil rights movement, that is, integration for Negroes. The Communist Party, when I went into the Party in 1957...advocated Negro nationalism, and a separate State for the Negroes, self-determination, and we fought to get the Communist Party to do away with Negro nationalism and fight for integration." [*Communist Activities in the Chicago IL area, Part 1*; Hearings Before the Committee on Un-American Activities, May 25, 1965, page 360.]

Civil Rights Movement--A Communist Creation?

According to Dan in his newsletter, *Dan Smoot Report* (DSR):

"The so-called civil-rights movement in the United States is a communist creation, and has been largely manipulated by communists since it was created." (DSR, 2/22/65, page 58)

This Smoot comment is substantively identical to the position of the John Birch Society. See, for example:

"Our task must be simply to make clear that the movement known as 'civil rights' is Communist-plotted, Communist controlled, and in fact...serves only Communist purposes." [*JBS Bulletin*, July 1965].

However, both Dan Smoot and the John Birch Society ignore or suppress the potent testimony of Birch Society members, endorsers, and speakers who have refuted standard JBS dogma which often comes from their personal experiences within the CPUSA as former FBI informants. Examples will be discussed below.

In addition, one must consider pertinent testimony about the status of African Americans in the 1960's.

For example, in November 1964, JBS member (and former FBI informant) Rev. Delmar Dennis told the FBI that:

"The Klan in Mississippi has completely infiltrated every phase of the legal, political, social and economic system in Mississippi. The membership in the Klan ranges from common laborers and criminals, to judges, lawyers, doctors and political leaders. While they may not be active members, they are secret members who use their influence to further Klan efforts and aid Klan activities, for example, it is generally known in Klan circles that supervisors who pick juries use their influence to get Klan members on the jury panel." [FBI Jackson field file 197-17905-5, no serial #, 11/28/64 Dennis informant report, page 10]

Similarly, George Schuyler, a prominent African-American intellectual and JBS endorser plus a speaker under the auspices of the Birch Society's American Opinion Speakers Bureau wrote in 1961:

"The White Citizens Council which has branches or cells everywhere, controls by terror such states as Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and to a lesser extent, Virginia...It has defied and disrupted the operation of the laws of the land. It has used threats and vicious economic reprisals...It has become a legal arm of Mississippi's Government." [4/22/61 Schuyler column in *Pittsburgh PA Courier*]

Despite these admissions, however, the Birch Society (and Dan Smoot) characterize our civil rights movement as entirely the creation of, and dominated by, "**Communists**" and "**Communist sympathizers**" -- as if opposition to the prevailing values and norms within Mississippi described above by Rev. Dennis and within southern states generally as described by George Schuyler could only come from disloyal, subversive, or radical Americans who had no genuine interest in social justice.

By contrast, see following statements by J. Edgar Hoover:

"It would be absurd to suggest that the aspirations of Negroes for equality are communist inspired. This is demonstrably not true." [Hoover speech, *Faith In Freedom*, 12/4/63, page 6.]

"In general, legitimate civil rights organizations have been successful in excluding Communists, although a few have received covert counseling from them and have even accepted them as members...The CP is not satisfied with this situation and is continually striving to infiltrate the civil rights movement at every level." [Hoover interview, *U.S. News and World Report*, 11/1/65, page 46; Note: why would Communists need to "infiltrate" a movement that Smoot claims they "created"?]

"Let me emphasize that the American civil rights movement is *not*, and has *never* been, dominated by the communists---because the overwhelming majority of civil rights leaders in this country, both Negro and white, have recognized and rejected communism as a menace to the freedoms of all." [Hoover speech, *Our Heritage of Greatness*, 12/12/64, page 7, emphasis on "not" and "never" in bold type appears in original document].

A Birch Society member wrote to Hoover in 1966 after seeing the above quote in a letter-to-the-editor of his local newspaper. He asked Hoover if the quote was accurate and, if so, whether or not it reflected his analysis both in 1964 and 1966. Hoover replied affirmatively and concluded: "This position remains essentially unchanged today." [HQ 62-104401, #3211; 11/15/66 reply to incoming inquiry by JBS member.]

"It is no secret that one of the bitterest disappointments of communistic efforts in this Nation has been their failure to lure our Negro citizens into the Party. Despite every type of propaganda boomed at our Nation's Negro citizens, they have never succumbed to the Party's saccharine promises of a Communist 'Utopia'. This generation and generations to come for many years owe a tremendous debt to our Negro citizens who have consistently refused to surrender their freedoms for the tyranny of communism." [J. Edgar Hoover: *An Analysis of the 17th National Convention of the Communist Party USA*; Statement made to Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, 1/17/60 and reprinted in *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, March 1960, page 7]

Dan Smoot on NAACP:

In the July 6, 1964 issue of *Dan Smoot Report* (DSR) Smoot discusses the history of how the NAACP was founded by "**55 prominent 'liberals and socialists' mostly white**". [Note that Smoot placed quotes around liberals and socialists to reflect his contempt for that description because he considered the NAACP to be a subversive organization founded and led by subversives.]

Dan then writes:

"In 1920, the New York State Legislative Committee Investigating Seditious Activities branded the NAACP a subversive organization, interlocked with several other socialist organizations, including the socialist party." (DSR, 1/6/64, p. 170)

One wonders why Smoot did not consider it significant to report that the NAACP was never cited as "*subversive*" or as a "*Communist front*" on any official list including:

- the "Attorney General's List of Totalitarian, Fascist, Communist, Subversive, and Other Organizations"
- the House Committee on Un-American Activities' "*Guide to Subversive Organizations and Publications*"
- or by the Subversive Activities Control Board or the Loyalty Review Board

Nor has NAACP membership ever been considered grounds for denying security clearances by our military or our government agencies nor would such membership trigger a security investigation.

Smoot's article continues by stating:

"By 1956, at least 77 top officials of the NAACP were known to agencies of the federal government as persons who participated in communist or pro-communist activities".

Participated in what way? For how long? For what reasons?

Dan doesn't say. Instead, he prefers to leave matters in the form of vague, sinister innuendo -- a common tactic in conspiracy arguments.

Among the persons whom Smoot thought deserved suspicion because of their alleged "*communist-front records*" were:

Roy Wilkins, A. Philip Randolph, Ralph Bunche, Morris Ernst, Thurgood Marshall.

Smoot also cited March 1957 testimony by Manning Johnson before a pro-segregation Louisiana legislative committee. Johnson testified against the NAACP and its Executive Secretary, Walter White. The Louisiana report is entitled "*Subversion in Racial Unrest*".

According to Manning Johnson:

"Basically, Walter White was never against the Communists, because he joined with them in numerous Communist front movements...while at the same time the Communists were actively infiltrating the organization from below..." (DSR, 6/6/64, page 171)

By contrast, the FBI regarded all of the "*suspect*" persons named by Smoot as responsible anti-Communists!

For the purposes of this discussion, I will focus below upon Roy Wilkins, Walter White, and A. Philip Randolph. [Note: Morris Ernst, the General Counsel of the American Civil Liberties Union, was an FBI informant who had a close personal relationship with senior Bureau officials and the FBI provided assistance to him for his 1952 book, *Report on the American Communist*.]

Julia Brown on NAACP and Walter White

Julia Brown joined the Communist Party but subsequently realized her mistake and she went to the FBI to report her activities. The Bureau asked her to remain in the Party and provide them with information---which she did.

After surfacing as an FBI informant, Julia became a paid speaker for the John Birch Society.

Dan Smoot endorsed the Birch Society and he often spoke at Birch Society functions. After he discontinued his newsletter, *Dan Smoot Report*, his subscribers received the Birch Society newsweekly magazine "*Review of the News*" to fulfill whatever time remained on their DSR subscriptions. In addition, Dan continued to write articles for *Review of the News* and for other JBS publications.

In a March 1961 magazine interview, Julia Brown stated that Communists had "*little or no influence*" within the NAACP and she concluded that:

"I'm 100 percent with the NAACP and I think they are doing a wonderful job and so does the FBI. Top government officials are aware that the NAACP is legal and is working in the American way for first class citizenship for all Americans." [*Ebony* magazine, "*I Was a Spy For the FBI*", March 1961, page 102]

In another magazine interview, Julia said:

"I don't think the Communists have appeal to Negroes. I feel that American Negroes are awakened to the menace of Communism." [*Sepia* magazine, "*Communist For The FBI*", September 1962, page 12]

Also see Julia's discussion about the NAACP, and in particular, her characterization of Walter White in her 1966 book, *I Testify* - which was published by the Birch Society:

"Many times I have been asked if the NAACP was a Communist front organization. I have been able to say, truthfully, that, so far as I could discern, it was not. Indeed the great Walter White, executive secretary of the NAACP prior to his death, fought Communism with might and main. Older NAACP leaders have been equally fierce in their opposition to the Red conspiracy. But it has only been by dint of great effort on the part of these loyal men and women that the Party has been thwarted in its attempts to completely dominate the NAACP." ... [Julia Brown, *I Testify: My Years As An FBI Undercover Agent*, Western Islands, 1966, pages 124-125.]

Julia also mentions that the wife of one prominent CPUSA official "[hated the NAACP as did all other Communists.](#)" (Ibid, page 125]

And referring to the Communist Party attempt to exploit the murder of 14 year old Emmett Till to its advantage, Julia observed:

["Greater success might have attended these efforts had the Party not been opposed by the NAACP...The CPUSA criticized the NAACP bitterly for not conducting a more militant campaign of protests and demonstrations. The NAACP adamantly refused to let itself be used, and counseled its members to avoid any action which would reflect adversely on Negroes."](#) (Ibid, page 165]

Lola Belle Holmes on NAACP

Lola Belle Holmes also joined the CPUSA at the request of the FBI. From August 1957 to January 24, 1963, Lola worked inside the Communist Party in Chicago and she provided information about Communist Party matters to the FBI. She also subsequently became a paid speaker for the Birch Society.

Lola's NAACP comments parallel those made by Julia Brown (discussed above). Prior to appearing on the Birch Society's lecture circuit as a paid speaker Lola (like Julia Brown) characterized CPUSA attempts to infiltrate NAACP as unsuccessful due to the anti-Communist leadership of the NAACP.

Only after joining the JBS as paid speakers did both Lola and Julia dramatically change their tune.

Lola discussed CPUSA attempts to infiltrate NAACP and the Negro American Labor Council during her testimony before the House Committee on Un-American Activities:

["I was on the NAACP caucus of the Communist Party from 1957 until 1959. I was nominated as secretary for the NAACP against the incumbent, and at that time we lost the election...Subsequently, the national office declared the election valid and the Party slate was thrown out. After the Party slate was thrown out, the Party caucus had a meeting in 1960 and decided to pull its forces out of the NAACP because they realized they could not work in the NAACP effectively."](#) [*Communist Activities in The Chicago Illinois Area, part 1*; Hearings before the House Committee on Un-American Activities; May 25-27 and June 22, 1965, page 372.]

HUAC Chairman Edwin Willis then asked Lola:

["Do I take it that these caucuses in the NAACP were not with the knowledge or approval of the leadership of the NAACP?"](#)

Lola replied:

["It definitely was not with the knowledge...I want it to be very clear the leadership of either organization did not know that the CP had caucuses working in their respective organizations. When they found it out, they found out who they were, they immediately dropped them from the membership list."](#) [Ibid]

George Schuyler on NAACP

George Schuyler is yet another John Birch Society speaker and writer whose evaluation of the NAACP and its leadership refuted standard dogma promoted by Dan Smoot and the JBS. For example, in a 1947 column he wrote the following about the NAACP:

["Unlike many other organizations that screamed for justice for Negroes, it had no ulterior motives, no axes to grind, foreign or domestic, only a deep desire to further the advancement of colored people, socially, politically, and economically."](#)

Then referring to the problems of racial discrimination still in existence after World War II came to a close Schuyler observed:

"These evils have to be combated with skill and intelligence and the NAACP is the only sincere and capable organization prepared to do it. Unlike such organizations as the National Negro Congress, it is not connected with any foreign ideology or power, and it shies far away from the Communist Party line which is the way to group suicide...no one can deny that the NAACP is THE great champion and defender of our rights in this civilization and its long and remarkable record in this connections obligates every libertarian, regardless of color or creed, to give it this fullest support year in and year out." [2/15/47 George Schuyler column "*Views and Reviews*", *Pittsburgh (PA) Courier*].

FBI and HUAC on NAACP

In April 1947, J. Edgar Hoover replied to a letter from NAACP Executive Secretary Walter White:

"Equality, freedom, and tolerance are essential in a democratic government. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has done much to preserve these principles and to perpetuate the desires of our founding fathers." [HQ 61-3176, #378X thru #383, 4/14/47 thru 4/21/47, White to Hoover and Hoover reply to White; Also see HQ 61-3176, #1076, where White's letter is discussed in 10/19/55 memo from FBI Assistant Director Louis Nichols to FBI Associate Director Clyde Tolson.]

In 1954, the House Committee on Un-American Activities published a report entitled "*The American Negro in the Communist Party*" which concluded that "The fact that the Communist conspiracy has experienced so little success in attracting the American Negro to its cause reflects favorably on the loyalty and integrity of the vast majority of the 15,000,000 Negro citizens."

The HCUA report goes on to state that the "CPUSA has exploited issues of genuine concern to the American Negro and all Americans..."

The HCUA summarized the testimony of two African Americans (Sheldon Tappes and Louis Rosser) both of whom detailed how the CPUSA fought the NAACP during World War II.

Rosser also mentioned how the Party worked to "discredit" and "muzzle" A. Philip Randolph by publishing a hostile article about him when he received a NAACP medal for his work seeking integration of blacks into industry. Randolph was described by the Communist press as a "traitor to his country". [HCUA, *The American Negro in The Communist Party*, pages 7-9]

In 1962 FBI Assistant Director William C. Sullivan gave a speech in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He subsequently was attacked because of favorable comments he made about the NAACP during a Q&A after his speech. The attack was launched by W.H. (Bill) Rutledge of Shreveport LA. Rutledge was Executive Director of Citizens Councils of Louisiana, Inc. Sullivan wrote a memo to summarize his encounter. The memo points out that Rutledge "has connections with the Ku Klux Klan."

According to Sullivan:

"In a question period at Baton Rouge, I was asked if the NAACP had been cited as a Communist front organization on the Attorney General's List. I replied that it had not. I was then asked if any communists had ever infiltrated the NAACP. I replied that communists had infiltrated certain local chapters of the NAACP and explained that because of such infiltration in the Chicago chapter, it had been expelled from the parent organization. I further pointed out that the NAACP was a constant target of communist infiltration, while at the same time, responsible leaders of the NAACP on a national level were attempting to resist communist infiltration and that only the future knew the answer to the final outcome of this encounter. I was then asked if the NAACP was controlled on the national level by communists. I replied that it was not, but again emphasized that the fact remains all levels of the NAACP, as well as all other mass organizations in the United States, had been and will continue to be a target for communist propaganda and infiltration. When asked to disclose the identity of communists who had infiltrated the NAACP, I replied that this information was classified and could not be divulged." [HQ 105-40774, #40 = 5/18/62 memo by W.C. Sullivan to A.H. Belmont pertaining to Citizens Council of Greater New Orleans.]

The Bureau prepared two comprehensive monographs on the history of "*The Communist Party and the Negro*". In the October 1956 edition, the Bureau concluded:

"Persons identified with the Communist Party and the NAACP have, in the past, acted jointly and frequently engaged in parallel activities. However, it must be kept in mind that the ultimate aims of these two groups are entirely distinct. The CP seeks to foster discord and discontent among the Negro race by agitation and propaganda...whereas the goal of the NAACP is to achieve full racial integration and equality within the present form of government. It is to be noted that the CPUSA, in order to confuse the American people, is attempting to make its policies parallel to those of the NAACP on controversial, racial issues....The NAACP held its 47th annual convention in San Francisco CA from June 26 to July 1, 1956. It re-affirmed its anti-communist position and at the same time extended its policy of non-cooperation with communist-controlled groups to declare communists ineligible for membership in the NAACP."

The monograph then goes on to discuss attempts by Communists to infiltrate and use NAACP chapters around the country and how local NAACP leaders repulsed such attempts.

Similarly, J. Edgar Hoover discusses the anti-Communist policies of the NAACP in his book, *Masters of Deceit*:

"The (Communist) Party has made vigorous efforts to infiltrate the NAACP. This organization in 1950 authorized its board of directors to revoke the charter of any chapter found to be communist-controlled." ... Hoover then discussed several such infiltration attempts and how NAACP officials thwarted them. [J. Edgar Hoover, *Masters of Deceit*, Henry Holt, 1958, p229-230].

Numerous documents in FBI investigative files reveal the unhappiness of senior CPUSA leaders with the NAACP and the failure of the Communist Party to have any significant impact upon both the NAACP and other civil rights organizations.

In July 1963, J. Edgar Hoover sent a memo to all field offices which advised them of the creation of a new HQ file (100-3-116) which was to be used to capture information regarding "*Communist Influence In Racial Matters*" as a consequence of the Party's renewed interest in exploiting opportunities presented by the civil rights movement.

Hoover's memo portrayed the CPUSA as outsiders seeking to exert influence within legitimate civil rights organizations and it quoted comments by CP leaders lamenting the lack of CP involvement within the civil rights movement. One pertinent excerpt of Hoover's memo follows:

"In recent weeks functionaries of the CPUSA have made statements which indicate their concern over the lack of Party participation in the current Negro movement. Benjamin J. Davis Jr. remarked on 6/19/63 while attending a meeting of leading CPUSA functionaries, 'We are witnessing a revolutionary movement in our country, but we are just not in it...' Irving Potash, on this same date, remarked that 'we' are not coming forward. Not writing and not giving leadership. The leadership of the Party, according to Potash, should explore all ways and means for the purpose of playing a bigger role in the struggle." [Chicago 100-46624, #1; 7/18/63 J. Edgar Hoover memo to all Special Agents in Charge of FBI field offices.]

A few days later, the Chicago field office sent its first report to headquarters on the status of CPUSA efforts at infiltrating civil rights groups. Chicago reported that one CP member had infiltrated NAACP's Illinois state headquarters, "**however he has not influenced the organization in any specific direction as far as Party policy is concerned.**" [Chicago 100-46624, #2, 7/24/63 SAC Chicago memo to J. Edgar Hoover]

On February 13-14, 1960, there was a meeting of senior Communist Party officials in the midwest.

Twenty five Party officials representing Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Missouri, and Wisconsin attended this closed meeting. Claude Lightfoot, Vice-Chairman of the Illinois CPUSA, chaired the meeting.

Each representative present gave a summary of their attempts to infiltrate the NAACP. The following comments are from what is described as an FBI informant who attended the meeting but it may have been a technical device which recorded the conversations. The page numbers shown below reflect the page numbers of the FBI summary memo where the comments cited are made.

Pg.9, Cleveland rep: "He referred to a period of the late 40's and said at that time the CP had five members on the Executive Board of the NAACP. Now the CP has no members on the Executive Board of the NAACP in Cleveland." Rep also referred to the "constant red-baiting of local NAACP leaders."

Page 11: Chicago rep: "The problem confronting the CP is how to work now in an organization in which it is very difficult to get on a committee and in which the committees do not function."

Page 11-12: Detroit rep: "He said it is hard to work in the NAACP in Detroit...He stated that the big problem as far as he is concerned is that the CP says that members should work in the NAACP, but how do you do it? Every time we make a move, we are stopped and stifled. As a result, we are demoralized...In regard to the role of the CP in the NAACP (name deleted) feels that it is correct to work in the NAACP, but it is necessary to do so from a position of strength. But the CP does not have strength at the present time."

Page 13: St. Louis rep: "He stated that the CP has no one consistently working in the NAACP in St. Louis." [NYC 100-80640, unrecorded; 2/17/60 SAC Chicago to J. Edgar Hoover re: 2/13-14/60 CP meeting].

As all these statements make clear, J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI saw Communists as **OUTSIDERS** seeking to infiltrate the civil rights movement and achieve influence and control whereas Dan Smoot saw them as **INSIDERS** who created the movement and controlled it from its inception.

ROY WILKINS

In April 1955 Roy Wilkins succeeded the recently deceased Walter White as Executive Secretary of the NAACP. J. Edgar Hoover asked his subordinates, "What do we know about him?"

The resulting summary memo was dated 4/13/55. The memo summarized Wilkins' earlier associations with left-wing organizations but concluded that Wilkins was "strongly anti-communist and has done all possible to steer NAACP away from any Communist infiltration."

The memo also summarized a 1949 report by an informant within the CPUSA which stated that the CPUSA was "greatly concerned over participation of Roy Wilkins" at a particular function because "Wilkins openly opposed to tactics of Communist Party and had been one of leaders in NAACP responsible for defeat of the Communists in their effort to take over the organization on a national scale."

The memo also mentions an article by "Benjamin Davis and Henry Winston, Communist Party functionaries on national level, critical of Wilkins in January 1950 because he would not accept Communist help." [HQ 62-78270, unrecorded, 4/13/55, M.A. Jones to Mr. Nichols.]

During the 1960's, Wilkins was one of the black leaders whom the FBI thought to be a responsible, moderate, anti-communist and one of two prominent African-Americans that the Bureau considered as the most desirable potential replacement for Martin Luther King Jr. as the leading advocate for African-Americans. The other person was Samuel Pierce.

In April 1968, FBI Assistant Director William Sullivan prepared a paper for publication in *Religion In Life*, a journal produced by the University of North Carolina Law School.

In a section captioned "Gains In Equality", Sullivan discusses "precedent-establishing Negroes (who) through hard work and abundance of ability and talent have become nationally and internationally prominent."

Among the persons he cited as deserving of respect and praise and "outstanding recognition" were the very individuals denounced by Dan Smoot (and the Birch Society).

Thurgood Marshall, U.S. Supreme Court Justice; Robert C. Weaver, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; Ralph Bunche (who) "has ably served this country at the United Nations", Carl Rowan "who has served his country with distinction"; and Roy Wilkins, A. Philip Randolph and Whitney Young (who) "have used their great skill and resources to gain so much for their fellow Negroes through remedies available under the law." [William C. Sullivan, *Communism and the American Negro*, Winter 1968, *Religion in Life*, page 600].

Lola Belle Holmes on A. Philip Randolph

During her 5/25/65 HUAC testimony Lola Belle Holmes described A. Phillip Randolph as "anti-Communist". In her HUAC testimony Lola described the formation of the Negro American Labor Council in 1960:

"It was organized by A. Philip Randolph with trade union leaders all over the country. They definitely were not Communists. As you know, Mr. Randolph is not a Communist and...most of the national executive board members or vice presidents were not Communists." [*Communist Activities in The Chicago Illinois Area, part 1*; Hearings before the House Committee on Un-American Activities; May 25-27 and June 22, 1965, page 372.]

For more extensive details concerning CPUSA hostility toward A. Philip Randolph, see chapter 6 of my John Birch Society report --- URL link at bottom of this report.

Dan Smoot on U.S. Arms Control & Disarmament Agency

In 1963, Smoot observed that "treacherous cowardice" infected our intellectual and political leadership and they wished "to abandon the national independence which our forefathers won with blood and valorous devotion to high ideals." This was a major theme in Smoot's 1962 book, *The Invisible Government*, which discusses the Council on Foreign Relations.

As one documentation for his conclusion, Smoot cited a U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency report and Smoot claimed that one of its authors (Walter Millis) argued for a "world 'completely policed' by an international army" where "such uprisings as the American Revolution of 1776 would be suppressed, as was the Hungarian Revolution, with all the global forces of law and order cooperating."

In his footnote Smoot cites as his source, a column by Edith Kermit Roosevelt which was placed in the *Congressional Record*. (DSR, 7/22/63)

Apparently, Smoot never bothered to read the actual comments made by Willis which appear in Volume II, ppA-10ff of the USACDA report.

Willis stated that whatever power structure might be created, "...the world cannot be denuded of either the weapons or of the ideas which make revolution possible. Revolution is, of course, an exercise of coercive power...Yet a world in which a possibility of revolutionary violence did not exist would be repugnant to most Western ideas of freedom."

Willis's comment about a "completely policed world" was in the context of explaining why such a world would be neither likely or desirable. Willis went on to suggest adoption of an international principle similar to Article II of the U.S. Bill of Rights concerning the "right of the people to keep and bear arms".

J. Edgar Hoover on Dan Smoot

"I welcome this opportunity to make it perfectly clear that former Special Agents of the FBI are not necessarily experts on communism. Some of them have sought to capitalize on their former employment with this Bureau for the purpose of establishing themselves as such authorities. I am firmly convinced there are too many self-styled experts on communism, without valid credentials and without any access whatsoever to classified, factual data, who are engaging in rumormongering and hurling false and wholly unsubstantiated allegations against people whose views differ from their own. Such activity makes more difficult the task of the professional investigator." [HQ 62-102675, #107; 5/23/62JEH reply to inquiry about Dan Smoot.]

Dan Smoot on J. Edgar Hoover

"Throughout my time in the FBI and for the next twenty years thereafter (when I was daily writing, speaking, broadcasting about events involving officials and programs of the federal government), I held the FBI and J. Edgar Hoover in high esteem---an attitude which I always expressed on the rare occasions when I mentioned Hoover or the FBI, either privately or publicly." [1/27/94 Smoot letter to me.]

"No one in America has a deeper reverence for American constitutional guarantees of individual freedom than J. Edgar Hoover has...Mr. Hoover has the deepest respect for all the constitutional restraints upon governmental power which make law enforcement difficult in the United States...All the communist propaganda...about FBI agents being abusive or violating the constitutional rights of people, or using gestapo tactics is a lie. Mr. Hoover would instantly fire any FBI agent who did such things." [*Dan Smoot Report*, 7/22/57, page 1]